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# PICTURE STUDY

BY

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PARENTS' NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL UNION  
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No piece of work undertaken in life will overstep its aims. Though men fail again and again to achieve their highest aims, they never drift unawares above the level they have desired. This truth applies also to lessons given. But in the rush of daily life, or among the exacting demands of a full time-table, the aim once in view is easily lost to sight. So from time to time it is a good thing to call to mind the aims in giving certain subjects to the children and the end to be achieved. The aims of Picture Study lessons and some of the means by which they may be attained are considered in what follows.

The children in the P.U.S. have Picture Study every term from six years old upwards. Between that age and, say, fifteen a child has studied reproductions of pictures by some thirty of the world's famous artists, and may own a considerable collection of reproductions of their works. Why are these lessons arranged? In order that children may be put in touch with the contribution that each famous artist has made to the world's store of all that is beautiful and 'worth-while.' Just as Literature introduces us to the thought of the greatest writers, so Picture Study opens the gates to the ideas of the famous artists. To deprive anyone of such an introduction is to shut him off from a wide field of enrichment and enjoyment; there are other, secondary, aims to the lessons. Powers of observation increase as children learn to *look* at a picture, a sense of beauty will be more fully developed with further power to appreciate. But these aims do not stand first; they are incidental. It is the child's contact with the work of the artist that takes foremost place. Here lies a difficulty. It is so easy for us to stand between



the children and that contact; without our help it may never be made, over-much help may prevent it from being direct contact. The grown-up who takes the lesson is an all-important middleman, but, like other middlemen, she must be lost in the background. There are many pictures that make their own independent appeal. Her judgment must tell when the helping word is needed, or when — as is specially the case with older children — too much speaking or over-much enthusiasm may be a barrier.

At this point it is convenient to consider the question of how much of the life of the artist children need to know. The general principle is — only so much as is really necessary to the enjoyment of his pictures, except in the case of girls of thirteen, fourteen or upwards. For example, when looking at Fra Angelico's pictures it is a real help to know of his saintly life in the community of monks at San Marco, though the rest of his life is of no importance. Or, to give another example, Millet's works are better appreciated by those who know that he led the hard life of a peasant, though the details of this life are not necessary. But for the pictures of Raphael, Memlinc or Constable the artist's life is of no importance. To attempt to interest small children too much in this may even take away opportunities of gaining intimacy with the man's pictures, and they are what he gave to the world.

In every Picture Study lesson it is important that there should be a short time in which children can look quietly at the picture, uninterrupted by questions or discussion. That is when there will be the best chance for each one to gain his own link with the picture and its painter's thought. Just how much time should be given to this, and at what stage in the lesson it should come, are matters that call for much discrimination. Many children love to 'chatter' about the picture, and it is right that there should be plenty of free discussion. But if this is quite unrestricted there is the danger that it may degenerate into mere chatter, and also the possibility that the bolder child will come out with everything before the quieter one has a chance to express himself. The place of this discussion

in the lesson depends upon many factors — not least the picture itself. In any case there are always those few minutes for studying the picture quietly. As the children find what is expected from them in the description that follows straight upon the 'looking,' so they learn to 'look' and not to gaze vaguely. At first there will be wandering attention among younger ones, unless a little help has been given beforehand. But this help must never be an explanation of the picture — that would be taking the child's part from him. It consists of any facts that may be needed by the child to enable him to enjoy and to describe. For a picture of *St. Christopher* an outline of the story is needed. With little children it is better to tell or read this before they have the picture, and then let them have the fun of discovering which part of the story is illustrated.

With very large classes it is not always possible for each child to have a copy of the pictures. But even with a single set there is no need for the children to miss that undisturbed contact. For a week beforehand the picture for the next lesson will be on the classroom wall, and after the first rush to see what it is, there will seldom be an odd minute before or after classes when one or two people are not standing in front of it and just looking. When the lesson comes round, different members of the class tell what has been gathered from the picture, the teacher explains anything not understood, and between them the class give a well-ordered description. Memory sketches may be added if the children are old enough, either individually or collectively on the blackboard, or a tableau pose of a group of figures may be given.

The foregoing are general considerations applying to lessons with children of any age. But at different ages varying aspects appeal. With 6—10 year-olds it is mainly the details that fascinate and the description given by the children should include as many as possible. Very likely it will contain nothing else. But the discussion may give an opportunity of leading towards something further. Suppose Gainsborough's portrait of Edward Orpin, the Parish Clerk, has been described. Someone of eight years old may have noticed his beautiful, thoughtful



face. The question, 'Why do you think he looks so happy?' may or may not bring a satisfactory answer. But it will make an opening for the realization that his Bible reading has brought this to him. Such ideas lead to that fuller understanding in older years which will find the thought that as the sun lightens his features, so the Bible has shed light on his mind and given him such a noble countenance.

Some little children are astonishingly quick to notice small details, while others seldom see anything in the background. A word from a grown-up often helps them to find what is there without actually showing details. The father digging in the garden in Millet's *Labecquée* may have been missed. When he has been 'found' there may be opportunity for giving an idea—he is at his daily task, just as the mother is at hers; it is part of the divine ordering that there is no food for man without labouring; the daily round and the yearly rotation;—different thoughts appeal to different people. Of course there must never be any forcing of meaning where none is intended. Gainsborough's *Market Cart* or Millet's *Girl Watering a Cow* are straightforward pictures and should be taken as such.

By eleven years old children should be giving orderly descriptions of pictures, and training in this must begin gradually some years before. By an 'orderly' description is meant one in which the principal objects and their positions are mentioned first, so that a listener who has never seen the picture gains a general idea of the arrangement (sometimes it is not a bad idea to imagine that someone who has not seen the picture is present!) Then the details are given, not haphazard, but on some considered plan. For example, when describing Millet's *The Shepherdess*, shepherdess, flock, plain, dog, time of day comes first and then follow the details of her clothes, the sheep, the distant landscape and the lighting. With a more complicated picture, such as Durer's *St. Jerome in his Study*, the narrator must give some thought if a successful 'general outline' is to come first. Children in classes soon become critical in this respect, and it is not a bad plan

for the teacher to keep her own record of children who have begun in this way, so that she may see that a first description falls to as many as possible. Although there is no teaching of composition, work along these lines prepares the way for its appreciation later on.

Some time between eleven and sixteen most girls go through a stage of intense criticism. Anything stiff, unusual and awkward is noticed immediately, and Italian or Flemish Primitives are not easily appreciated, even by those who at six or seven loved such pictures. For at that age the spiritual appeal of the picture is direct and unfettered by the attitude of maturer years. Naturally this growing sense of valuation—criticism—is not yet coupled with discrimination. To keep a happy medium is the teacher's part. Children should not be allowed to spend much time in rather pointless discussions over details. If some corners of the picture are rather dark, or if there is a small reproduction of a very detailed picture, e.g. Memlinc's *Light of the World*, the fact that everything will not be clear must be accepted and it must be realized that in consequence everyone has a right to her own opinion. When studying Manet's portrait of his parents, or Gainsborough's one of his two daughters, it is the faces and personalities that are important, not the details of the curtains or trees or whatever is behind the figures. So the balance of the lesson is kept in the right place.

It is a good thing to give children of this age a variety of ways to 'narrate' the picture. In addition to oral or written descriptions, there are memory sketches, sometimes of details sometimes of the grouping of the whole, sometimes monochrome studies of dark and light masses. As a rule it is principal lines that should be memorised, and it is well for none but the most gifted to put in facial features.

From fifteen years old upwards Picture Study assumes a slightly different aspect. The history of the development of the 'schools' of Western European Painting is being studied in Mary Innes' book, and the artist for the term takes his place in this development or in relation to other members of the



same school. Moreover, direct attention will now be paid to the composition of a picture; the particular pictures studied fall into place as regards the artist's work as a whole; there is some knowledge of his contribution to the history of painting and of his special characteristics.

This paper has dealt with a number of possible difficulties but not because Picture Study is a 'difficult' subject. Indeed all that is needed is enthusiasm and interest for pictures and understanding of children. Everyone will have a slightly different method of carrying out the lessons; some may disagree with the suggestions given here. But whatever the method used in a lesson, the end achieved is always the same. The children have been put in touch with one of the 'great' men of the world and with a part of his work, which was himself, because it was creative work.

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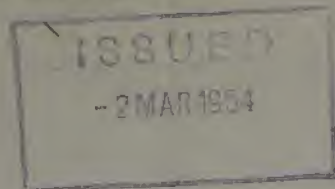
*Fairfield P.N.E.U. School  
Ambleside, Westmorland*

INSPECTED ON 12th, 13th and 14th OCTOBER, 1953

NOTES

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## Introduction, Nature and Scope

In order to give reality to the training which she proposed to provide for her students in her newly opened training college for governesses the late Miss Charlotte Mason opened in 1892 a school for a few young children, which she conducted from the College. From this small beginning Fairfield has developed in the sixty years of its life until now it is a school for some 150 pupils, housed in its own premises and carrying on an independent life whilst still maintaining very close links with the Charlotte Mason Training College. Though it is still primarily the practicing school where the students can see the principles of the Parents' Union School in action and practise the art of teaching according to these principles, at the same time it is providing a carefully planned education in a boarding school setting, chiefly for girls from the ages of 4 to 18, but also for a small number of boys under the age of 8.

The School prospectus sets out the aims as follows:—"Fairfield aims at giving a sound education as the best preparation for life. Each child should develop to the best of her ability, hence in the gaining of knowledge it is of paramount importance that a child should learn at an early age habits of industry, concentration, and accurate observation, the use and joy of a controlled imagination and the powers of self-expression. Special care is taken to avoid any nervous strain. The hours of work are short . . . cramming for examinations is not permitted. Children are trained to a wise use of leisure and hobbies of all kinds are encouraged. The children benefit from the wide interests of the Parents' Union School and also from many opportunities for sharing in the College activities".

The close association between the School and the College does, without a doubt, confer many benefits, both material and otherwise, on the School; at the same time, however, certain problems of organisation and other difficulties arise in consequence of its having to serve as a practising school for the College students, which result in some loss of efficiency to the School. Further reference to this is made in later sections of the report. Her Majesty's Inspectors sensed that the special and intimate nature of the association of the School with Charlotte Mason College, involving as this does the necessity to follow closely the lines laid down by the Parents' Union School, does in some respects make it difficult for the School to make certain adjustments in organisation and approach which seem to be in the best interests of the pupils.

There are nine boys, all under eight years of age and all day-children. It is the policy of the School not to retain boys on its books after the age of eight. Of the 146 girls in the School, 110 are boarders. A very few day-children under the age of five are admitted to the preparatory department housed at Springfield, where there are 31 pupils; in the junior section of the School, housed at the Beehive, there are again 31 pupils. The senior section, catering for 92 girls from the age of 10 to 18, is based on Fairfield. Children enter the School at widely

varying ages. Day-pupils generally enter young, but there is now a tendency for the age of entry of boarders to rise. Rather less than half of the girls at present in the senior school entered from outside at the age of 11 or later. A number of these had failed to gain entry to a maintained grammar school. No educational test is applied to these entrants, although the Principal assures herself that they are capable of benefiting from the education provided. The School draws its pupils from a wide area and a number have parents overseas. In the last three years eight boys and 35 girls have passed on to other schools; of the girls 21 have gone to private schools and six to maintained grammar schools. The average school life of the girls in this group of leavers has been three years. In the same three-year period 35 other girls have left the School; two have entered universities, six have proceeded to colleges of further education or to training colleges, six to secretarial colleges and 10 have gone on to train for nursing or other forms of hospital work. About 50 per cent. of these leavers had been from five to eight years in the School; two of them had spent 12 years of their lives there.

It should be mentioned that as a consequence of the interdependence of School and College, school holidays have to coincide with those laid down for the Training College and amount to some 18 weeks in a year.

## Governing Body

The School is governed by the Ambleside Council, which is also responsible for the Charlotte Mason College and the Parents' Union Correspondence School. The 22 members represent a wide range of interests and include among their number men and women who occupy prominent positions in their chosen spheres. The Council meets twice a year in London and the Principal attends all meetings. The Treasurer and one member of the Council visit the establishments at Ambleside each year and stay two or three days, after which they report on their findings and impressions to the Council. It is evident, therefore, that the Council is keenly interested in the affairs of the School and the Principal appears to enjoy their confidence.

## Finance

The school fees range from five to 20 guineas a term for day-pupils and from 40 to 54 guineas per term for boarders according to age. Piano lessons are provided free as part of the curriculum, but additional fees are charged for violin and 'cello, Greek and ballet dancing, elocution and riding. A reduction of two guineas is made in the school fee at the senior school stage for boarders who enter the School under eight years of age, and the fee for a boarder's younger sister is reduced by one guinea. A charge of 1s. 6d. a day is made for mid-day lunch for day-pupils.

The finances of the School are an integral part of the finances of the whole undertaking for which the Ambleside Council is responsible and it is understood that these are in a satisfactory condition. It is clear that in order to keep the costs to parents as low as possible, every regard has to be had to the economical running of the School. It is unlikely that it would be able to enjoy some of its amenities and such a generous staffing ratio were it not for its special relationship to Charlotte Mason College.

The School Staff is paid on the Burnham Scale. Special arrangements apply in the case of the College lecturers who teach part-time in the School.



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## Premises and Equipment

The School is fortunate in its situation in the midst of beautiful Lakeland country. The teaching accommodation is provided by rooms in two moderate-sized private houses known as The Knoll and Springfield and by two fair-sized detached classrooms known as the Ark and the Beehive. In addition the pupils have the use of the College building known as the Barn for Physical Education, dramatic performances, etc., and of the College Art room and small biology laboratory. Senior girls also have access to the College Library. On the infrequent occasions when it is necessary for the whole School to assemble together the Barn is available for the purpose, but for daily assembly the preparatory, junior and senior sections assemble separately in reasonable comfort in their own special quarters. The only fair-sized classrooms are the Ark and the Beehive. The latter is used by the two Forms of the junior school without any fixed partition and though H.M. Inspectors feared that there might be much inconvenience and disturbance to the work in this arrangement, they were assured that teachers and children readily became accustomed to the conditions, especially as the unit of the teaching is the small group. By keeping the classes in the senior school at their present size it is possible to avoid overcrowding in the smaller teaching rooms at the Knoll. The Science laboratory is very small indeed and cannot be said to afford suitable accommodation for the teaching of Science in the School. The Barn, though in many ways a very attractive building, is not ideal for Physical Education as it is not very well lighted and is rather long and narrow; furthermore head space is reduced by balconies which run the length of two sides. It is supplemented by a small room where certain special apparatus can be used. No provision is made for shower baths after exercise periods and the changing room which adjoins the hall is rather small. There is at present no accommodation for the teaching of Housecraft. It is understood that an additional building adjoining one of the houses has recently been acquired, but it is not known how far this may help to overcome deficiencies in the accommodation.

The various rooms which have been described are spread about the School and College Estate and it is only by careful organisation that time in moving from one to the other is reduced to reasonable proportions. Great care is taken in supervising the crossing of the main road which separates the College from the School. But it is very desirable that notices should be posted, warning motorists of the possibility of children crossing.

The School and College have very pleasant gardens and grounds in which the children can wander. For games the School has hitherto shared the use of the two College fields and the one hard-surfaced court in the College grounds. It is understood, however, that as soon as a third recently acquired field can be made ready for use by the College, the School will have the sole use of one of the playing fields, which at present accommodates one hockey pitch and one grass netball pitch. The latter might be of more value if it were extended to make a small hockey pitch for beginners. Two tennis courts in a neighbouring public park are hired for the season.

The premises and grounds appear to be carefully maintained, but it is to be hoped that when opportunity arises the internal decoration of a number of the houses will receive attention and that full use will be made of attractive colour schemes. The majority of the rooms used as teaching spaces are heated by oil stoves and the Inspectors felt doubtful whether the heating would be adequate in severe weather if proper standards of ventilation were to be maintained at the same time.

Generally speaking the School is adequately equipped for the work it undertakes, though the meagreness of the Science equipment matches the limited

laboratory accommodation. An additional sewing machine would help considerably in the development of the Needlework. For Physical Education an agility mattress and more mats would be useful and it is suggested that the erection of scrambling apparatus in the grounds would improve opportunities for the younger children. Books in general are well chosen and in good supply and the School has the use of a fair range of teaching aids.

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## Boarding Arrangements

The 110 boarders are accommodated in five houses. The 29 juniors, girls between seven and a half and eleven years of age, live at Hilltop, which was formerly an hotel and provides very convenient and suitable accommodation for boarding purposes. The girls are in the charge of a matron who appears to be an admirable person for the work and to manage the domestic affairs in a very business-like manner. Two assistant Mistresses have rooms in the house and they take over supervision duties when the matron is off duty. The children have a well balanced and varied diet.

The 81 senior girls are mainly concentrated in three houses; eight of them, however, sleep at Low Nook, which is the centre of the Parents' Union Correspondence School, the staff of which are resident in the building. The other girls live in Springfield, Fairfield and the Annexe. They are under the general supervision of the senior matron, who holds the qualification of S.R.N., and there are two assistant matrons. Members of the teaching Staff live in each house and assist with supervision duty during the matrons' off-hours. There are common-rooms in each house, but all the girls take their meals in Fairfield, where the kitchen is situated. This is not modern, but is adequate for present needs. It is understood that washing-up facilities are to be improved. In the absence of full records of menus and of stores issued it is not possible to assess the nutritional content of the diet, but from the meals seen and from what could be gathered in discussion, it appears that the girls are having a satisfactory diet, though rather a monotonous one. It has been the definite policy of the School to promote good relationships with the local community and for this reason there is no bulk-buying of food.

The limit of numbers has clearly been reached with the present accommodation. The conditions under which the girls live are satisfactory, if a little austere. It is suggested that the furnishings, particularly in the common-rooms, are rather drab and might be improved as opportunity permits. The general arrangements for the maintenance of the health of the girls are satisfactory and care is taken to ensure that they have plenty of exercise in the fresh air. This is made easier by the arrangement of beginning afternoon school at 4.30 p.m. The daily routine is carefully planned on very suitable lines. There is a delightful absence of any sense of nervous strain and of institutionalism. The girls enjoy a life which approximates as nearly as possible to that in a happy family inspired by Christian principles and are given a large measure of freedom which they use sensibly. In order to foster the school spirit and to discourage the formation of cliques the senior girls change their houses and dining tables each term. Much is done for the girls, but they are left to take considerable responsibilities.

The School consults the appropriate Authority on fire precautions and satisfactory arrangements are made.



## Staff

The general responsibility for both Training College and School is vested in the Principal, a former student of the Charlotte Mason Training College, who was appointed to her post some fifteen years ago after service in private schools. School and College are closely related—most of the College Staff do part-time teaching in the senior school, some of the School Staff give lectures in the College, students practise in the School and the School provides classes for the weekly criticism lesson. The Principal's function is to watch over the affairs of both School and College and to ensure that as far as possible each makes its contribution to the other without reducing its own efficiency in the process. Her task is no easy one, but the relatively small size of the College does make it possible for her to maintain close personal relationships with the girls in the School, in the general direction of which she plays a very important part. She appoints staff, interviews prospective parents and supervises all the correspondence relating to admission of pupils and handles all financial business. Certain important responsibilities are, however, delegated to the Head Mistress of the senior school and to the Head Mistress of the junior school, each of whom receives a modest responsibility payment. Under the Principal they attend to the details of organisation and time-table for their respective departments, to matters of discipline and to the general supervision of the work of their pupils. Curriculum issues are a matter for discussion with the Principal. As far as can be judged the system works without friction; consultation is frequent and easy and points of view have opportunity for expression. A strong co-ordinating hand is necessary for such a complex organisation and the Principal has played a leading part during a difficult period of transition in building up the School. She is a woman of considerable strength of character and personal charm; she holds firmly to her principles, but once she is persuaded that a change is to the advantage of the School she acts with vigour and determination. She has little time to teach in the School, but she does manage to take periods with the senior Forms in Church Teaching and English Literature. The position of the two Head Mistresses is a little unusual in that they have not quite the authority they would have if the School were a completely independent unit. While under the circumstances this limitation is only to be expected it is important that their confidence in themselves should be built up and that they should be encouraged to exercise the closest oversight over the work in their respective departments. It must fall to them to ensure that the staffing resources are used to the best advantage, that those teachers who are concerned with any one subject should work as a team and that proper progression is maintained from Form to Form.

The junior school is staffed by the Head Mistress and three other Mistresses. Three of the four were trained at the Charlotte Mason College and hold its teaching certificate; the fourth is a recent student of the College who is taking her examination again in a year's time. In addition they have the assistance of students who spend one week at a time in the School and are responsible for small groups of children. The full-time teaching Staff in the senior school consists of the Head Mistress, who is a graduate of Edinburgh University and holds the Charlotte Mason College Certificate (First Class), and three other Mistresses, all of whom hold the Charlotte Mason Certificate. Most of these full-time Mistresses have had some experience in other schools, chiefly P.N.E.U. or private schools. In addition to these seven Mistresses the School has the services of members of the College Staff. Eight of these give approximately half their time to teaching in the School, mainly in the senior school; they include four graduates of British Universities (one with First Class Honours), another who holds the Brevet Supérieur of Paris, one qualified in Physical Education and two with Charlotte Mason College Certificates. Three women and two men do part-time

teaching in subjects most of which are "extras". According to the number of students in the College, one or two students at a time give assistance in teaching classes or parts of classes, chiefly in the lower three Forms of the senior school. Occasionally a student who has a good background in her special subject is allowed, with the consent of the Head of Department, to teach in the upper Forms.

To summarise: the Staff consists of Principal, eight full-time, eight half-time and five visiting teachers—the equivalent of some thirteen full-time teachers for 150 pupils. This generous staffing ratio makes it possible to arrange that much of the teaching is given to small classes, the largest group being 18 (except on those occasions when A and B divisions are combined) and the smallest four. Eight of the permanent Staff have had two years or less in the School; only three were appointed prior to 1947. It is a young Staff—more than half are under forty years of age. Its experience includes most types of school, with a predominance of private schools. In view of the nature of the School the qualifications can be considered to be satisfactory. None stands out as being a teacher of real distinction, but all give the impression of being conscientious and of being interested in their pupils and in their work. One or two are weak—but on the other hand one or two show promise of developing into very good teachers, particularly if they can accept the challenge which is being thrown up at some stages of the work and can show more initiative and resource. It is no doubt inevitable that in this School, where by tradition the printed word is looked upon as the chief and most important source of knowledge and inspiration, the teacher tends to step into the background; but it appeared to the Inspectors that there was room, and indeed need, for the teachers to put a finer edge on the work of the girls by arousing a more critical attitude to ideas and by encouraging the girls to greater creative effort. They should also beware of accepting standards of work that fall short of the ability of the girls.

Most subjects of the curriculum are reasonably well covered; adjustments in staffing would need to be made as opportunity allowed if the demands for advanced work in Latin, Geography, and History should arise. A redistribution of duties among the specialist teachers would reduce the load that one or two members of staff carry. Further specialist help in Music is required.

## Library

The Library is housed in a pleasant, though small, room in one of the senior boarding houses. It contains about 1,000 volumes, partly fiction and partly reference. The reference books cover a wide range of subjects, and are specially suitable for girls in the middle Forms. In addition, each Form has its own library, again partly fiction and partly reference. The Librarians, two girls from Form VB chosen by the Head Mistress, are responsible for cataloguing and issuing books. No accepted system of cataloguing has been adopted. Under the chairmanship of the Head Mistress, a committee, consisting of elected representatives from each Form, decides how best to spend the termly subscription of 6d. contributed by the girls. No other source of revenue is available. Though organised in a somewhat haphazard fashion, the Library is widely used, and few books are lost. In theory, the College Library is open to the senior girls; in practice, few girls appear to take advantage of this privilege.



## Junior School

For the purposes of this report the term "junior school" is used to cover all Forms catering for children under the age of eleven years, i.e. Playroom and Preparatory, Forms IB, IA, IIB and IIA.

At present sixty-two children between the ages of just under five years and ten years are grouped in five classes in the junior school. They occupy two houses, both with pleasant outdoor space around them, on opposite sides of the main road; these premises are known as Springfield and the Beehive. The former is a converted dwelling house and the youngest pupils up to eight years of age have three rooms on the ground floor; the latter is converted from a large games room originally attached to the nearby mansion, now the Charlotte Mason Training College. Here two groups of older girls (the boys leave the School between seven and eight years of age) are taught in one room, the groups being separated from each other for most of their lessons by portable screens. The classrooms are adequate in size for the number of children although the one used by Upper IA and Lower IA in Springfield is a little crowded at the present time. The rooms are sufficiently heated and ventilated. Except in the Playroom, where there are tables and chairs, the pupils sit at individual locker desks. Cloakroom and sanitary offices are provided indoors for the youngest pupils; at the Beehive the cloakroom adjoins the classroom but the pupils have to go a short distance out-of-doors to the toilets.

There are three Mistresses fully trained in P.N.E.U. methods employed in the junior school, two with the older pupils and one with the younger children. The remaining two groups at Springfield are taken by a Mistress who has not yet obtained her Charlotte Mason College Certificate and a student in training from the Charlotte Mason College. The Mistresses stay at Springfield or the Beehive for teaching but change their classes within these houses either weekly or fortnightly. Most of the teaching is done by the Mistress in charge of the class at that particular time but there is also a certain amount of changing of staff for different lessons throughout the day. Daily log books of work taken by the Mistresses are carefully kept and handed on to the Mistress taking over the class. Nevertheless, in the case of the youngest pupils, it must be questioned whether it is a sound procedure to change so frequently the person dealing with the children.

The nine youngest pupils stay only for three hours each morning; the rest of the children from Springfield go to the Beehive for an hour each afternoon whilst the older pupils go for walks, and they (the older pupils) return to school for a further hour's tuition at 4 p.m. Thus the children from IB upwards have four hours at school daily and three hours on Saturday morning.

Every day commences with prayers taken with the whole group in each house, followed on some mornings by Bible lessons in the classrooms. The curriculum covers all the usual subjects and the morning is divided into twenty-minute periods for work connected with English, including Reading and Writing, Arithmetic, History, Geography, Nature Study, Music and Physical Education. For those pupils who remain for afternoon lessons there are two periods of half-an-hour for either Art, Craft, Reading, Writing, Nature Study or Singing, though the older pupils now have an hour period twice a week for Art or Craft.

The teaching of the children follows very closely the syllabus provided by the Parents' Union School and examinations take place each term on the work covered. In the beginning stages of Reading and Writing the children make slow but steady progress at their own rate, working from text books. These beginnings might be made more interesting and purposeful if a better selection of simple,

well-illustrated books were attractively displayed in the classrooms and used regularly alongside the more formal readers and if some of the children's writing could draw on their knowledge of them or arise from their own experiences rather than consist, as it largely does now, of copying poems and sentences from a printed book which many of the pupils are unable to read. Although there is some practical equipment in the form of shops, sand, water, weights and measures, and money for the use of the younger pupils, it is hard to discover what part these take in the teaching of Number, which confines itself mainly to the children working examples page by page from a text book.

The reading ability of the girls develops as they pass through IIB and IIA and many of them read delightfully and enjoy the good books with which they come into contact at school. Generally speaking the pupils listen attentively, they develop a keen sense of observation and their memories are trained well to report accurately, in spoken language, the stories they hear and the reading they do in connection with the Bible, English, History, Geography and Nature Study. Their speech is clear and their words well chosen when they are relating this information. The written English and the diagrams done in connection with the above subjects are carefully set out; they depend almost entirely for content upon the children's own reproduction from the books and the stories. The pupils do this work well but there is little chance for frequent original written work of any length or their own observation of everyday things. The one piece of set composition done this term by IIA was generally weak. In Arithmetic the pupils work individually from a text book. The pupils can manage their sums in a mechanical way and the setting down is tidy and neat. Some of the work in Art is giving the children opportunity to interpret their own ideas and there were several interesting pictures in paint displayed on the classroom walls. For Craft the range of materials is narrow and the work seen at the time of the Inspection was almost entirely directed by the Mistress. The pupils go for Nature walks from time to time and paint a specimen they have found on their return. They show a lively interest in this subject.

The children are very friendly and pleasant to meet: they gain in confidence and poise as they go through the junior school and talk easily with each other and to adults. The permanent Staff know the children well and follow their development with sympathetic understanding.

## Senior School

### Organisation, Curriculum and Standards of work

Forms III, IV and V are each divided into an A and a B division, though the VA division is known as VX and is the Form from which the examination for the General Certificate of Education is first taken. Entrants to the School are placed in the Form which appears to suit their age and ability; most of those entering from the junior school pass into IIIB, which is in a sense a transition Form. It is usual for a girl to pass up from the B to the A division at each stage, though the more able ones may stay only one term. There is a rather wide age spread in the IIIB and IIIA divisions, but this is narrowed in subsequent years. For some subjects IIIB and IIIA combined and IVB and IVA combined are taught by the Form Mistresses, notably for Religious Knowledge, English Literature, History and Geography. If a student is available she will take one or other of the divisions. For Mathematics, French, Latin and English Grammar the girls are setted according to ability. For Science and Art the teaching is usually in B and A divisions. It is clear that there is a wide



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range of ability which makes the teaching of a whole form rather difficult and the formation of the smaller groups is welcomed, but it is rather surprising that with all the resources of staff it is found necessary to combine divisions for so many occasions. Girls weak in English or Arithmetic when they enter the School do not commence Latin; they do extra work in English and Arithmetic set and supervised by a student.

There is usually a small Sixth Form for girls who have passes in certain subjects in the General Certificate Examination at Ordinary level and are now working at the Advanced level. This year four girls are in the Sixth Form, though one is not likely to stay to complete the course; the others have English Literature and French as their Advanced subjects. Recently there has been a move to encourage girls to commence work at Advanced level in the VX division in their strong subjects while allowing them to complete their study of other subjects at Ordinary level. In this year's VX there are five girls in this category and the subjects concerned are French English Literature and Biology. These five intend to stay at least another year. Since the introduction of the General Certificate of Education there has been a gradual reduction in the number of subjects offered in the external examination so that the average now is five or six. It is understood that the School is still subject to pressure from parents to enter girls for subjects in which it appears that they are unlikely to pass, and there may well be a case for making further explanation to parents of the nature and purpose of the new examination. Girls in VX drop most subjects that they are not offering for external examination and have periods of private study; consequently the more subjects offered in the examination the less the amount of private study. Physical Education, Music and Art are continued by all girls, whether or not they are taken as examination subjects.

At present there is no provision for Housecraft. It is possible that the School might find it worth while to introduce at an appropriate stage a carefully planned course incorporating practical subjects which would provide a welcome relief from the strongly emphasised verbal approach characteristic of many subjects, especially for those girls who do not appear to have a marked capacity for working with ideas in the abstract. These girls might also be expected to profit from the extended study of Geography, which at present ceases in VB. Two girls are beginning the study of German with the help of an outside teacher. It is understood that more use would be made of part-time teachers if small numbers of girls should show a wish to proceed to advanced studies in subjects for which at present the School makes no provision. Music "Theory" is taken by these girls in the Fourth and Fifth Forms who are persevering with their study of a musical instrument. A lively interest in Nature Study is aroused at all stages. Several less usual subjects appear in the curriculum of all girls, and not as options; these include Picture Study (the study of the works of a great painter), Architecture, Astronomy, Everyday Morals and Economics. As far as could be observed in the short period of the Inspection these studies appear to be fulfilling a useful purpose. All girls are encouraged to carry out a special study of some topic in which they are interested. It is a good feature of the School that the girls from a quite early stage are expected to do a certain amount of undirected study and provision is made in the day's time-table for such work as well as for "preparation". Homework done out of school hours is kept to a very modest amount; the girls have a full day and such a policy appears to be sound.

In consequence of its being a practising school for students training to carry out the methods of the Parents' Union School much of the work of the School is on lines laid down in the Parents' Union Programmes. These relieve the Staff of the necessity of taking the initiative in drawing up schemes of work and

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to a certain extent reduce their freedom of action in the treatment of the scheduled material. It is suggested that it would be of great value if all those who are committed to the Programmes could be given full and detailed syllabuses in each subject which would show at a glance the way the work was to develop through a child's school life, thus enabling the teacher to see her immediate task in perspective. The part of the School's curriculum which is not covered by the Parents' Union Programmes includes all work for the examination for the General Certificate of Education in VX, the Science of IVA, the special study and Church teaching. Some modifications to suit the needs of individual girls have been introduced into one or two other subjects.

The special emphasis on narration and on written reports is a feature of the School on which comments are made in some of the subject sections of this report. The Inspectors were doubtful whether the work in some subjects such as History and Geography did not suffer from the lack of subject note-books; while to some extent the "report books" replace these, they do not appear to provide the valuable discipline of assembling selected material. The emphasis on descriptive narration seems to lead to a neglect of critical appraisal. Nevertheless it is clear that the girls are being trained successfully to give their attention to the subject matter in hand and in most subjects their capacity for the acquisition of knowledge is well developed and they narrate with fluency and skill.

Details of the standard attained in the various subjects will be found in the subject sections of the report which follow. The level of attainment varies considerably from subject to subject. The best work is done in Religious Instruction, English Literature, Music, History and French. Mathematics is a very weak subject at present; Art and Craft are showing signs of improvement after a bad patch. Science is severely handicapped from developing on satisfactory lines by the poverty of the accommodation and equipment. In the external examination in the last year or two the able girls have achieved their aim in a limited number of subjects but results in general have not been very impressive. This may mean that there are some girls for whom an academic course is not suitable; on the other hand the academic work as a whole cannot be expected to flower at the top of the School whilst so many subjects are taught for so long by non-specialist, non-graduate Form Mistresses.

The Parents' Union School Examinations are taken twice a year in most Forms, the School providing its own papers in Languages, Mathematics and Science. Reports are sent to parents at the end of each term.

## *Subjects of Instruction in the Senior School*

### RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

From three to four periods a week are devoted to Religious Instruction at different stages in the School and in addition the girls are encouraged to undertake some private reading at the weekends. The girls who are not offering Religious Knowledge in the external examination drop the subject. The Sixth Form is following the B.B.C. broadcasts for Sixth Forms. Eight girls are working for the examination for the General Certificate of Education at Ordinary level.

The course is based on the Parents' Union Programme and each term portions of both Old and New Testament are studied. The study of the prophets and of one or other of the epistles is included. The teaching is given to combined A and B divisions by the Form Mistress (except when a student is available). A passage from the Bible is read and narrated and then discussed. In the lessons



heard, though care was taken to ensure that the girls had a good knowledge of the facts, it did seem that the Mistresses missed opportunities of bringing out the full significance of some of the points and, where appropriate, of making clear the relevance to the contemporary situation. Nevertheless the girls know their way about their Bibles and have a very good knowledge of the principal events and of the great figures of both the Old and the New Testaments. The written work is chiefly of the "report" kind; in addition girls are required to commit to memory carefully chosen passages. The teaching for the external examination is effective; use is made of suitable books of reference.

#### ENGLISH

The syllabus in English is broadly conceived: it includes a systematic training in spelling and handwriting, a progressive course in grammar, and a comprehensive study of literature. Nor is speech training neglected: there are many opportunities for dramatic work, and at all times the pupils are expected to speak clearly and audibly.

Below Form VX, the Form Mistresses are responsible for the major part of the work. Grammar, however, is taught in smaller sets based on ability. Perhaps the most successful part of the work at this stage is the teaching of literature; the girls generally read widely and with enjoyment, and many show a sensitive appreciation of poetry. The standard of written work varies considerably, but there was evidence of pleasing writing on imaginative subjects. Essays involving some appraisal of literature and the arrangement of ideas in logical sequence might well play a more important part in the work of the abler girls in Forms IVA and VB. Composition books are corrected with care, but less exacting standards appear to be demanded when "Report" books are used.

The Head Mistress, who is a graduate in English, and a member of the College staff, who holds a degree in History and Theology, are responsible for the work at Ordinary and Advanced levels respectively. It was too early in the school year to make a fair assessment of the standard of work achieved at these levels: little written work had been set and only a small part of the syllabus covered. But the girls were working well, and the beginnings of advanced work appeared to be stimulating and thorough. As there are few suitable books of reference in the Library, it would be helpful if the resources of the College Library could be made easily available to the senior girls.

#### HISTORY

There is a generous time allowance for History, which below Form VX is a class subject taken by the Form Mistress. As there is no History specialist on the staff any demand for advanced work would be met by a lecturer from College. A Mistress trained at the Charlotte Mason College is responsible for History at the Ordinary level.

The syllabus is designed to give some idea of the foundations of western civilization and of the main trends in English History. It was pleasing to find that stories about Greece and Rome, and about outstanding men and women play an important part in the scheme. The pupils, however, might find it easier to see events in historical perspective if History were treated chronologically. At present, though an outline of English History is covered in a five-year course, the starting point varies with the year of entry; it may be 1066, or 1485, or 1714.

The teaching is generally conscientious, and much of it is based on text books which are chosen with care. From time to time accounts, mainly narrative in character, are written in "Report" books and entries made in the "Book of Centuries". Ways and means of putting these books to better use, and of

introducing written work of a more exacting nature for the abler pupils were discussed during the Inspection. The pupils, however, enjoy their work, and read the many historical novels and reference books provided in the Form and School Libraries.

Closely related to History are the weekly lessons in Citizenship, given to the younger pupils, and in Morals and Economics, given to the seniors. These are designed not only to stimulate interest in present-day affairs; they also supplement the work in History, and lead to a fuller appreciation of the moral and cultural foundations of western civilization.

#### GEOGRAPHY

Geography is included in the curriculum for the first five years in the senior school, but the course is discontinued at the end of the fifth year and there is no work in this subject either at Ordinary or Advanced level in the examination for the General Certificate of Education. The two Third Forms work on the same programme, although at present they are being taught separately; the two Fourth Forms are taught together. Three members of the Staff, one a graduate and the other two trained in the Charlotte Mason College, share in the teaching. The Mistress taking Form IV has herself a lively interest in the subject which is communicated to her class.

A six-term course of descriptive geography covering Asia, Africa, Australia and America is followed by a further six-term course which includes a general study of Europe with a more detailed study of the British Isles. In Form VB part of a syllabus which covers the physical and regional geography of the world is taken, together with a little geology. Opportunities for weather recording, model making and some expeditions are included in the course. The time available—three lessons a week in the Third Forms and two in succeeding years—is not a generous allowance for such a programme.

The girls are interested in their work, and they gain a considerable knowledge of places and people and some acquaintance with a physical geography of the world. Books on exploration and discovery are available and are included in the reading which the girls are expected to do; this valuable side of the work might well be extended to a wider range of travel books for the older girls. No separate note books are kept for Geography. The written work is slight and is confined mainly to descriptive passages. The mapping which is undertaken does not show any marked development from one year to another. The value of the course as a whole would be increased if the work made a greater demand on the girls as they move up the School.

There is no room set aside for Geography, but the School is on the whole well supplied with equipment (including film strip projector and episcopes) and with illustrative material. It seems indeed a pity that the course should be curtailed as it is at present for all the girls.

#### LATIN

A high proportion of the girls learn Latin. They begin in Form IIIB and if they have sufficient aptitude may reach the Ordinary level of the examination for the General Certificate of Education in five or six years. In 1951 two girls were unusually successful in carrying their study of the language to the Advanced level. Owing to the small size of the School and the wide range of ability, the teaching is not easy to organise or to carry out. The Forms are re-distributed in sets for the first four years of the course; this facilitates grading of the pupils by attainment but does not avoid the spreading of the instruction over four members of the Staff. The small size of the classes admits of much individual attention but the meagre allowance of time (three periods a week rising to four in Form VX) protracts the earlier stages of learning.



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The Staff does not at present include a Mistress with high Classical qualifications. The top set and Forms VX and VI are taken by a lecturer of the College who included Latin among her graduation subjects and is an effective teacher, though without the resources of a specialist in the subject. The lower sets are taught by Form Mistresses trained at the College, where they followed a four terms' course of Latin.

The work of the first three years closely follows the selected manual. The teaching is clear and patient but a little cumbrous in method and not sufficiently exacting. The learning of the rudiments progresses rather slowly and too little practice is given in reading or memorizing continuous passages of Latin. In the senior stages a fair skill is acquired in the elements of composition and portions of certain authors are mastered, albeit with something of a struggle.

The subject adds scholarly substance to the curriculum and gives a girl with academic ambitions an opportunity to qualify for her career. Classical influences are not confined to the language teaching; the achievement of Greece and Rome bulks largely in the lessons on History and is well represented in those on Citizenship and Literature.

#### FRENCH

The Mistress responsible for the work in French in the School is also a College lecturer. She is a native of France with the qualification *Diplômée de Paris*, and she has been a member of the Staff for more than 20 years. She takes the work of those girls who are following a French course in Forms VI, VX and VB, and she also takes the top set in the Third and Fourth Forms, where each pair of classes is divided into three sets. The top set in each case is a small and highly selected group. Three non-graduate Mistresses share the remaining work. Though their handling of the lessons is reasonably adequate, the children miss something of the advantages to be gained from hearing fluent native speech, and it seems a pity that the groups working with the Head of the Department should be kept quite so small.

In the first five years of the course each Form is given three lessons a week, each lesson usually lasting about an hour. More numerous lessons of rather shorter duration would probably prove of greater value. The girls in Form VX and the Sixth Form have more time, those following an advanced course working sometimes together and sometimes in separate small groups. The wide range of ability among the girls in the School as a whole presents a serious problem which has not yet been fully solved. It seems likely that the less able would benefit from a modified course, planned independently of any external examination, giving less emphasis to the formal language work and providing increased opportunities for reading and speaking in French and for translating from French into English.

The children from the junior school have already learnt a little French when they join the seniors, and there is a fair amount of spoken French at all levels, though more could be made of the incidental opportunities that occur in the lessons. Further opportunities are provided by the arrangement of "French tables" at meal-times, and the B.B.C. Intermediate French talks are used. The best girls in each year do well and the four girls at present following an advanced course in the Sixth Form are making quite good progress. There are, however, a number of girls in the upper Forms whose spoken French is still lacking in fluency and marred by elementary mistakes and whose written work is very inaccurate.

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The course tends to concentrate on the academic work and there is not much evidence of any attempt to awaken an interest in the French people and their country. No pictures of places in France are displayed and the French newspaper which was at one time introduced has been allowed to lapse; few of the senior girls have a French correspondent and exchanges are not arranged by the School. There is scope here for a considerable advance.

The needs of the older girls for books can be met from the combined resources of School and College.

#### MATHEMATICS

Five Mistresses, of whom two are graduates and three hold Certificates of the Charlotte Mason College, share in the teaching of Mathematics in the senior school. At the time of the Inspection the Third and Fourth Forms were divided into five sets, each taken by one of the five members of Staff concerned, while Form VB and Form VX were in the hands of the Head of the department. These arrangements are, however, varied from time to time, and even within the existing sets small groups of girls may be working separately. The teaching as a whole lacks distinction and throughout the upper Forms greater clarity and decision are called for in the handling of the work.

The syllabus is closely tied to the text-books used in the School. The proposed course is sound, but the work lags behind, and a more determined effort to achieve steady progress is needed. In Form VX only six girls are taking Mathematics. There is no advanced work.

It is recognised that the work in Mathematics is likely to be particularly affected by some of the difficulties confronting the School as a whole. In addition to the problems raised by the wide spread of ability among the girls there are others arising from the admission to the upper Forms of girls whose attainment in the subject is often poor. There remain, however, serious weaknesses in the work for which responsibility must rest with the School. Among the weaker pupils the most elementary mistakes and misapprehensions persist and their general level of attainment is very low. Even the better pupils at the top of the School are uncertain of their groundwork and lack both the confidence and the competence to deal with simple problems. Much of the written work is rather fragmentary and poor style is often passed without comment in the exercise books.

It seems likely that modifications in the handling of the oral work in class might enable the time given to "mental arithmetic" and similar exercises to be more profitably used, and that better use might also be made of the available preparation periods. In general, a greater demand should be made on the powers of the girls themselves.

Some attempt is made to bring reality into the lessons through the choice of examples; greater emphasis might be placed on common sense in dealing with this work and more attention paid to reasonable approximation.

#### SCIENCE

The facilities for the teaching of Science are not good. The only laboratory, shared with the College, is a small room which cannot comfortably accommodate more than about eight girls and it is therefore impossible to find adequate time for girls at all stages to pursue a course of practical work in Science. The only Forms which are taught regularly in the laboratory are IIIA (in two sets, for basic General Science), part of IVA (for elementary Chemistry) and the group of girls (usually quite small) which is following a General Certificate Biology Course at Ordinary level in VX or VI. Other work has to be taught in a classroom and is chiefly descriptive. The equipment is meagre and can be said to be reasonably adequate only for Biology.



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The course which is provided is based very largely on the Parents' Union Programme. Nature Study in Forms III and IV is taken by Form Mistresses and Physiology in Form IVB by the Physical Education Mistress. The College lecturer in Science (a well qualified Honours Graduate in Botany) is responsible for the remainder of the Science teaching. General Science is studied in IIIA, Botany in Form IV and Biology in VB. In IVA girls choose to do either Chemistry or Astronomy in addition to Botany. In VX those wishing to take Biology for the examination for the General Certificate of Education continue the subject; for the others the Science course comes to an end. At present there are three girls taking Biology and all three are intending to stay on to the Sixth and take the subject at Advanced level. There is at present no Sixth Form Science.

The course is limited in content and the standard reached is not high. Many of the girls have only an uncertain knowledge of the groundwork and there is little genuine investigation or systematic experimental work. Many of the girls take an interest in the life and features of the countryside and some of the Nature note-books contain pleasing examples of very careful recording with water-colours. It is suggested, however, that this early interest could be used to lead on to work of a more exacting and systematic kind to be undertaken by the older girls. Suggestions were also made at the time of the Inspection for a reshaping of the Science course to give it a richer content and a greater unity.

#### ART, CRAFT AND NEEDLEWORK

The Mistress responsible for Art and Craft joined the School only a fortnight before the Inspection. She is responsible for most of the work, but a student usually takes one of the junior Forms. All through the School the present standard is low, but under the guidance of this new and lively teacher there is every hope that the work will improve. She has drawn up her own scheme with reference to the existing Parents' Union Programme, and it is possible that, eventually, she may influence the content of this. There is scope for reconsideration of the work in Craft, particularly at the junior level. If this were improved, the girls would be better equipped for Needlework at the senior stage.

Very little Needlework was seen as only the two lower of the senior Forms take it, and the Mistress responsible, also new this term, has not yet had time to clarify her aims. At present her work is restricted because there is only one sewing machine. There is a strong need for the girls to work quickly on attractive articles for which they can be entirely responsible, thus encouraging the development of individuality and craftsmanship.

#### MUSIC

The School aims at giving its pupils musical experience in considerable variety. An unusual feature is the provision of individual piano teaching, free of extra charge, to all who ask for it; in the current term 95 pupils, from Form II onwards, are availing themselves of this liberal offer.

Each Form below the Sixth is allowed one weekly period of class singing; Forms IA to IIIA inclusive have an additional period devoted to aural training and the elements of notation; and Forms IVB, IVA, and VB have a weekly period described as "theory". The choir, open to girls from the Fourth Forms upwards, has a membership of roughly half the pupils in these Forms. A few girls offer Music as a subject at Ordinary level in the examination for the General Certificate of Education. A voluntary "appreciation" group meets on Sundays and affords opportunities for listening not only to gramophone records but also to performances by pupils and staff. The School provides no string tuition, but there is a small orchestra of Staff, students and pupils.

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The whole of the organisation of this complex scheme, and the main burden of class and individual teaching, rests upon the one full-time specialist, who in addition to her responsibilities in the School has the tasks of lecturing in the Training College and supervising students' teaching practice. She is a sensitive musician and an able teacher who evokes a lively response from pupils of all ages when she is able to come into direct contact with them. She delegates some of the individual piano teaching, especially in the lower Forms, to three non-specialist Mistresses, who appear to be capable of putting beginners on to the right lines. She also entrusts some of the College students with the musical group-training of the younger children; the presentation of nursery songs and singing games in this part of the School was fairly successful, but a lesson in percussion playing revealed the necessity for clearer understanding of the educational aims of this activity.

The only other teaching assistance is provided by a part-time Master who, since Easter 1952, has undertaken the "theory" classes, some of the singing classes, and the orchestra. Although he has resided for some years in this country he has considerable language difficulty, which combined with advancing years and an academic viewpoint makes contact with his pupils uncertain and a reasonable rate of progression scarcely attainable.

There is undoubtedly a musical atmosphere in the School; several of the senior pupils show keen interest and powers of leadership; the choir sings competently and its quickness of ear and eye show the benefits of sound aural work. Equipment is generally good, and the various activities are carried on in attractive and comfortable surroundings. The main problem is to secure continuity and a more uniform level of teaching in order to realise the full educational value of what is potentially a satisfactory scheme of musical training.

#### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All girls are given one gymnastics lesson, one thirty-minute lesson for English country dancing and two or three periods for games each week. The games include hockey, netball, tennis and rounders. Swimming is taken during the summer in Windermere Lake. Ballroom dancing is taught to the Second and Third Forms by the Physical Education lecturer from the College and to the older girls by students from the College. For those girls who wish to learn dancing as an "extra" subject, special classes are taken by a visiting Mistress. At the time of the Inspection 38 girls had enrolled for these classes for the current term.

The Physical Education Mistress, who is an experienced teacher, is mainly responsible for gymnastics and games. Another member of the Staff teaches English country dancing and a third takes the swimming.

In spite of the difficult conditions, gymnastics are being successfully taught on modern lines, and the girls are interested, responsive and eager to do their best. The work now needs to be made more purposeful and the girls could well be further encouraged to use their own initiative in developing their skill and control.

Conditions for gymnastics are difficult. The College hall, which is used for this purpose, is situated some distance from the School and the room itself is dark and rather narrow and not well suited to Physical Education. It is equipped with some portable apparatus; an adjacent small room, known as "the Box", is fitted with a double beam, a ladder and some ropes. The Mistress takes the main part of the class in the hall while a group of girls uses this equipment under the supervision of a student; the Mistress cannot effectively supervise this work, limited as it is by the lack of space.

Bad weather at the time of the Inspection unfortunately made games impossible.



## *Corporate Life*

The school day commences with prayers, which are taken separately by the three sections of the School. The daily time table has been so arranged that the day-girls as well as the boarders can take part in many of the activities which the School provides outside the classroom. Some of these involve groups of girls working in co-operation—such are the dramatic society, orchestra, choir, girl guides, gardening circle, animal defenders' group, library and magazine committee. Other activities such as summer bathing picnics, winter skating and sledging expeditions, nature rambles, fell walking and a variety of other pursuits are arranged when opportunity offers. In the winter time leisure hours are fully occupied by a wide range of individual interests and hobbies. Parties of girls attend concerts and recitals arranged in the neighbourhood, and a considerable number are members of the local Film Society. The School choir sings on Sundays in the village church at Rydal and takes part in the Westmorland Music Festival.

On Sundays the boarders attend church and a time is set apart for reading, letter writing and for listening to music as well as for walks. Every encouragement is given to the girls to use their time profitably, but leisure is left for the individual to express her needs in her own way. The atmosphere of the School is clearly most wholesome and relationships between girls and Staff seem to be all that could be desired; all concerned with the upbringing of the girls have a high regard for their spiritual and moral welfare and the visitor is struck by the interest which is taken in every individual boy and girl. The older girls impress by their poise, natural good manners and good sense, by the ease with which they converse with visitors and by their obvious enjoyment of their school life with one another.

## *Conclusion*

This is a happy, healthy and well conducted School which goes a long way towards achieving its expressed aims. Good habits are inculcated and special emphasis is placed upon the reading of well chosen books as a means whereby knowledge is gained. The girls are thus made aware of the richness of the human heritage, but the emphasis placed on the mere acquisition of knowledge sometimes means that the girls' minds are not being fully stretched and that opportunities for creative work are unduly restricted. The Staff are not markedly resourceful and work of a high standard is not apparent in many subjects. The School appears in some respects to be a little hampered by its reliance on programmes of work which are designed with somewhat different circumstances in mind and it has not altogether succeeded, as yet, in evolving a curriculum which is appropriate to the needs of all the girls. Nevertheless, inspired as it is by a faith in a very definite educational philosophy, the School is doing a great deal for its pupils and is giving them a sound preparation for life.



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# APPENDIX

## NUMBERS AND AGES OF PUPILS IN FORMS

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		Number of Pupils in the School whose ages on 1st October, 1953 were:—																
Form	Total No. of Pupils	Average Age			under 5	5 and under 6	6 and under 7	7 and under 8	8 and under 9	9 and under 10	10 and under 11	11 and under 12	12 and under 13	13 and under 14	14 and under 15	15 and under 16	16 and under 17	17 and under 18
		Y.	M.															
Playroom ...	4	4	6	B.	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
				G.	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Preparatory	5	5	5	B.	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
				G.	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
IB ...	6	6	5	B.	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
				G.	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
IA ...	16	7	4	B.	—	—	2	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
				G.	—	—	4	4	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
IIB ...	15	9	0	B.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
				G.	—	—	—	—	7	7	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
IIA ...	16	10	0	B.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
				G.	—	—	—	—	2	6	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
IIIB	14	10	10	B.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
				G.	—	—	—	—	—	1	7	5	1	—	—	—	—	—
IIIA	18	12	3	B.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
				G.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
IVB	16	13	2	B.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
				G.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
IVA...	13	13	11	B.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
				G.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
VB ...	15	14	10	B.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
				G.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
VX . .	13	15	11	B.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
				G.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
VI ...	4	16	11	B.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
				G.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ...	155			B.	1	1	4	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
				G.	3	4	8	4	12	14	18	10	16	20	13	14	8	2